

April 24, 2006

Afghanistan Freedom Watch

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan



Soldiers keep comrades safe

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A Chinook from Company B, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, flies humanitarian aid to Pakistan last October. The 158th played a vital role in the Pakistan earthquake relief.

Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Matthew Rizzo
158th Aviation Regiment

Cover: Army Sgt. Ryan Jones provides security in central Mazar-e-Sharif as an Afghan police officer passes by. Jones is assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment.

Photo by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry
19th Public Affairs Detachment

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Afghanistan **Freedom** Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan **Watch**

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Afghan-led forces detain insurgents in Kandahar

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Afghan and Coalition forces detained eight insurgents during a combat operation in the Maywand District of Kandahar Province on April 18.

The joint operatives raided a compound in Dukah village, detaining suspected narcotics traffickers and confiscating weapons. A U.S. attack helicopter provided close-air support during the mission.

In recent weeks, combat missions led by Afghan security forces have disrupted multiple terrorist cells and foiled several suicide- and roadside-bombing plots in southern Afghanistan.

"Insurgents are growing more desperate and out of touch every

"Together with our Afghan allies, we continue to improve security and stability for the people of Afghanistan."

**Army Lt. Col. Paul Fitzpatrick
Combined Joint Task Force - 76 spokesman**

day," said Army Lt. Col. Paul Fitzpatrick, Combined Joint Forces spokesman. "Together with our Afghan allies, we continue to improve security and stability for the people of Afghanistan."

Coalition troops, Afghans thwart terrorist attacks

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan Public Affairs

JALALABAD AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Coalition forces continued to improve security in Kunar Province on April 17 by killing five terrorists after a patrol spotted seven enemy fighters maneuvering in the open west of Asadabad.

In two other events that same day, residents alerted Coalition forces to pending dangers and helped thwart attacks.

These incidents demonstrate the Afghan and Coalition resolve to stabilize eastern Afghanistan and defeat insurgent

activity as part of Operation Mountain Lion, officials said.

"Our goal is to move Afghanistan into the next phase, which includes reconstruction and development," said Army Lt. Col. Paul Fitzpatrick, Combined Joint Task Force - 76 spokesman. "Our current operations are effectively defeating the terrorists. Our follow-on mission is to help the government of Afghanistan."

In Nangarhar Province, a civilian led Coalition soldiers to a Russian-made 100 mm anti-tank round. A Coalition explosives team removed the would-be bomb, rendering it harmless.

In Paktika Province, an Afghan impeded terrorists' intentions by warning Coalition soldiers about two rockets pointed at a Coalition base.

A Coalition patrol located the rockets that were set to launch on a timer, and a strike from an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter destroyed the munitions.

"The courage these residents display in stepping forward to show us where the ordnance is located is another example of how local Afghan people are helping to improve security and bring the violence to an end," Fitzpatrick said. "We're seeing more and more of this all the time."

Photo by Army Pfc. Michael Nyeste, 19th Public Affairs Detachment



Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week

Afghan cultural tidbit

Where are my friends?

Dari

Doostani man Kuja hastand?
(Dos-tani-man-ku-ja has-tand?)

Pashtu

Zama malgari chairta di? (Za-ma-mal-gari chair-ta-di?)

Afghan families are traditionally very large with at least four children. Some men also have more than one wife. The households are normally run by the father who works outside the home. The wife usually does all the housework, such as cleaning, cooking and taking care of the children.

Quick reaction helps save lives

By Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry
19th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Soldiers assigned to the 14th Combat Support Hospital here were just a few of the many Coalition forces who came to the aid of Afghan school-children injured in a terrorist attack April 11 at the Salabagh Primary School in Asadabad, the capital city of Kunar Province.

The attack left three boys and four girls dead and 34 children wounded.

"We received a call requesting assistance from our forward surgical team in Asadabad," said Army Lt. Col. Kathleen Herberger, a nurse practitioner with the 14th Combat Support Hospital.

A seven-person quick reaction team, including a pediatric intensive care doctor, a nurse anesthetist, an intensive care nurse, two licensed practical nurses and one nurse practitioner, were flown to Asadabad by a CH-47

Chinook helicopter.

"We always have a quick reaction team prepared for events like this," Herberger said. "We don't want them to happen, but we're always ready."

The medical team rushed to the Asadabad Provincial Reconstruction Team medical clinic where Coalition forces and Afghans brought 29 children for treatment.

The team was able to bring five patients to a medical facility here, three by Chinooks and two by UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

Two of the children were critically injured and had already undergone surgery for stabilization by the forward surgical team in Asadabad, Herberger said.

Three other children were not critically injured, and two of them had also undergone surgery for stabilization, Herberger added.

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Trainees graduate, become Afghan academy cadets

By Army Capt. Junel Jeffrey
Office of Security Cooperation - Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan – Though the day was cold and rainy, 260 trainees at the National Military Academy of Afghanistan did not allow the weather to put a damper on their hopes for a brighter future.

Distinguished guests from the Afghan National Army, Coalition forces and academy staff gathered March 20 to watch the trainees graduate from basic training, formally becoming academy cadets.

"I am the honest and legal son of the people of Afghanistan," cadets said as they recited the academy's oath. "By entering the Army, I swear to be a well-disciplined student, to defend the territory, integrity, national sovereignty and values of Afghanistan."

More than 1,000 high school students from various provinces across Afghanistan vied for the opportunity to join the ranks of cadets at the four-year institution. Following a medical assessment, an interview and a challenging exam prepared by Kabul University, the academy's faculty narrowed its selection to 260 applicants.

Cadet Gujer Khan Fakermard, a second-year academy student, was encouraged by his family to join the academy to seek more opportunities than were available in his community of Kuner.

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National Military Academy of Afghanistan trainees stand in formation during their graduation ceremony.

Photo by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry



Army Spc. Ashley Brown strokes the cheek of an Afghan child injured in a rocket-propelled grenade attack on the Salabagh Primary School in the capital city of Kunar Province on April 11. Brown is assigned to C Company, 710th Brigade Support Battalion.

Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Mason T. Lowery, Office of Security Cooperation - Afghanistan Public Affairs

MEDICS, from Page 4

Herberger said the team was more than willing to care for the Afghan children.

She said it is part of her mission.

"I think the reason the 14th Combat Support Hospital is here is to help the people of Afghanistan ... help them rebuild their health-care processes and also to provide the health care when their processes don't work. ... That's truly the reason that we're here," Herberger said.

Army Lt. Col. Kathleen Herberger tends to two children on a flight from Asadabad to Bagram Airfield on April 11. Herberger is a nurse practitioner at the 14th Combat Support Hospital.



Photo by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry, 19th Public Affairs Detachment.

CADETS, from Page 4

"I want to serve my country because it is in need of rehabilitation," Fakermad said. "The young generation has to study and work for our country. NMAA is a liberal place that belongs to members of every ethnic group in Afghanistan. My goal is to graduate and serve my dear country."

Despite provinces like Helmat, Zabul and Paktia, where Coalition forces continue to face Taliban resistance, the academy successfully recruits students from across the country.

Maintaining an ethnically balanced student population is one of the considerations the faculty kept in mind when selecting cadets.

"When cadets are brought here, we explain that Afghanistan is

a big country," said ANA Col. Mohamed Amin, head of the academy's military training department. "One thing that creates pride is the feeling of belonging to one nation, not a province or an ethnicity."

The academy helps students to overcome financial burdens while equipping them with a good education and a commission. Without an academy education, Amin says that most of the cadets would work as farmers or leave Afghanistan to seek employment in other countries.

"These young leaders will serve as professional officers of the ANA," Amin said. "With the best uniforms, the best training, way of life and education, they make me confident in the success of a brighter future for Afghanistan."

Enduring Voices

Where do you find beauty in Afghanistan?



**Army Spc.
Quenisha Williams**
391st Engineering
Battalion

"Only the mountains."



**Navy Petty Officer
2nd Class
Rio Gomez**
Embedded Tactical Team
2-3

*"The mountains and
the people."*



**Air Force Tech. Sgt.
Arthur Jones**
169th Equipment
Maintenance Squadron

*"My down time, work-
ing out and my rou-
tine in general."*



**Army Sgt.
Ronnie McNeal**
699th Maintenance
Company

*"The gym. I enjoy
watching myself work
out in the mirror."*

Afghan aviators return to Bagram Airfield

By Army Sgt.

Stephanie van Geete

Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- Afghan National Army Air Corps aviators began training with Task Force Falcon aviators and U.S. Army Soldiers here April 11.

The arrival of the 18-person team marks the first assignment of Afghan aviators here in 15 years.

The aviators will use two Russian-made Mi-17 Hip helicopters.

"The goal of this mission is to integrate the Afghan National Army Air Corps into Coalition operations," said Army Chief Warrant Officer Tim Basso, an embedded trainer accompanying the Afghan aviators.

"The end result is to get the Afghan



Photo by Army Sgt. Stephanie van Geete

Army Col. Michael Rose welcomes Afghan National Army Air Corps aviators as they arrive at Bagram Airfield on April 11. Rose commands the Coalition's Task Force Falcon. The Afghan aviators will operate with Coalition forces during Operation Mountain Lion and beyond.

See RETURN Page 7

Air Force squadron soars, supports six rotations

By Air Force Staff Sgt.

Jennifer Redente

455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan -- The 41st Expeditionary Electronic Combat Squadron completed their 700th sortie flying the EC-130H Compass Call

on April 7, two years to the day since they deployed to support Operation Enduring Freedom.

While most Air Force units deploy for one air and space expeditionary force cycle and then return to their home station to reconstitute before their next AEF deployment,

the 41st EECS has supported six consecutive AEF rotations.

"The squadron originally deployed to support the major combat operations of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2002, but returned home after the fall of the Taliban," said Lt. Col.

Allen D. Hansen, 41st EECS commander. "We again deployed April 7, 2004, and supported OEF out of K a r s h i - K h a n a b a d , Uzbekistan. The unit moved here ... in June of 2005."

"This is a first for the 41st EECS," Hansen said. "Usually we deploy during major combat operations and redeploy home at the end of those operations. This is what originally happened for OEF."

"The flight crews, maintenance and support personnel deployed to Bagram are performing above and beyond any expectation," the colonel said. "We have the monumental task of flying every night (more than 40 hours every week) with a single aircraft. The maintenance personnel work to ensure the aircraft is ... ready for the



Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente

Airman 1st Class Weston D. Sadler inspects an antenna on an EC-130H Compass Call. Sadler is assigned to the 41st Expeditionary Electronic Control Squadron.

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RETURN from Page 6

pilots familiar with the way the Coalition does operations, and for the Coalition to learn from the Afghan pilots what the tactics for the area are."

Army Col. Michael Rose, Task Force Falcon commander, said the aviators' arrival came at an opportune time.

"With this training, we can incorporate them into ongoing operations in support of Operation Mountain Lion ... and also as we work together during the remainder of the time Task Force

Falcon is here in Afghanistan, this gives us the opportunity to continue to develop a relationship that will go on past our departure from here."

Many of the Afghan crew members served here before but departed in the 1990s during Afghanistan's civil war.

The aviators, some who previously fought against the Taliban, volunteered to return to service when the Air Corps was being created last year.

ANA Maj. Bashir, the ANA's liaison officer to Task Force Falcon, said he

has seen control of the base pass through many hands, from the Afghan government to the Russians, the Northern Alliance, the Taliban and now the United States. The ANA current mission is a step toward the Afghan government reclaiming control of the airfield – but Coalition support is needed, he said.

"Without the help of the Coalition, and especially the U.S. and our partnership with Task Force Falcon, we cannot do it," he said.

Team climbs 7,200 feet, helps neighbors

By Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste
19th Public Affairs Detachment

PANJSHIR PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team members recently climbed a 7,200-foot mountain and traversed an old Afghan-Soviet battleground on the mountaintop to reach the village of Darwashie as part of their weekly assessments in Panjshir Province.

The purpose of the visit was to do a routine assessment on the village and to hear firsthand the villagers' wants and needs, said Army Master Sgt. Jerry Wagner, the PRT's first sergeant.

When the PRT team arrived in the village, they were greeted by three Afghans outside the villages' primary school. Within minutes, about 40 villagers gathered around the PRT team outside the school to observe, listen and discuss what they felt needed to be done and what they thought of past PRT projects in the village, said Amanyardaudzar Baryalai, the team's interpreter.

The villagers requested many things, but the most common request was for a new school to be built that would also house a medical clinic. Another prevalent request was for a micro-hydro electrical power plant, Wagner said.

Discussions were predominantly cordial and friendly, but an engineering student at Kabul University was displeased initially with the visit, citing that a previous visit from a PRT team and a provincial government official had yet to yield results in the village, Baryalai said.

PRT officials cited projects they had done in the province and a recently constructed road in the village itself, Wagner said.



Photo by Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste

Army Master Sgt. Jerry Wagner, left, Baryalai Amanyardaudzai, and an engineering student talk about PRT projects during a meeting in the village of Darwashie. Wagner is the Panjshir PRT first sergeant.

"When we mentioned the road, the villagers lit up, and they smiled," Wagner said.

The engineering student was satisfied with the answer, Baryalai said.

After 15-additional minutes of discussion, the PRT team was lead back to the mountaintop by a village education official who guided them to the group's descent trail.

Once the downhill climb was over, Wagner spoke of how important it was to keep good relations with local communities.

"The people are our neighbors. It's important that we form relationships and friendships with these people so we can continue to help them," Wagner said.

SORTIE from Page 6

crew to go fly within a few hours."

The lone Compass Call aircraft here fly every day and have only missed two missions in the last six months, Hansen said. "I doubt you could find a squadron commander out there who would be willing to accept the challenge of deploying with a

single aircraft and flying every day for six months," he said. "We have done just that. This is a testament to the men and women of the 41st EECs and their dedication to duty. They truly emulate Air Force core values."

More than a dozen Compass Call aircraft are being upgraded, the colonel

said. This upgrade will take more than two years and increase the aircraft's capabilities well beyond what they are today.

"We will continue to support OEF ... to the level we are presently," he said. "Even during this upgrade."

Compass Call is an airborne tactical weapon system that uses a modified

version of the C-130 Hercules airframe, according to the Air Force EC-130H fact sheet. It uses jamming capabilities to deny, degrade and disrupt the enemy's ability to communicate.

The system also supports tactical air operations, and provides conventional and special operations support to friendly forces.



Army Sgt. Ryan Jones provides security in central Mazar-e-Sharif during a brief stop. Jones is assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment.



Army Spc. Daniel Parra provides security in Mazar-e-Sharif. Parra is assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment.

Soldiers keep com

By Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry
19th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP SPANN, Afghanistan --

Providing a safe environment for the Regional Corps Assistance Group is a never-ending mission entrusted to security forces Soldiers here.

"Our primary mission is to secure the base," said Army 1st Lt. Steve Miller, officer in charge of security forces for the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, a Florida National Guard unit.

They control the towers, the entry control points and maintain a quick reaction force, he said. The Soldiers also provide convoy security for Camp Spann's embedded training teams and Afghan National Army convoys.

The ETTs should only have to focus on

their mission of properly training the ANA, Miller said.

"My guys focus on their security, the security they have to have. ... They can't be anywhere without it," Miller added.

Miller's men also help the ETTs train Afghan soldiers.

"A lot of the ETTs are field artillery officers, so my guys will help them with infantry tactics because we're the only infantry here," Miller said.

The unit also carries out regular missions like running reconnaissance patrols, maintaining perimeter observation points and making daily runs to the airport to pick people up or drop them off.

Longer security missions are conducted as well, Miller said.

"We escort the ETTs' convoys through



... to the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment.

Grades safe

... out the northern theater. ... That can be 12 hours to the east or west and many places in between," Miller said.

"We've done pretty much everything the infantry does here ... cordon searches, mounted and dismounted patrols; we helped with the elections; we've reacted to ambushes and [improvised explosive devices]. ... It's been a great experience overall," said Army Sgt. Ryan Jones, a security forces section leader assigned to the 2nd Bn., 124th IR.

Although the team has plenty of experience, they strive to better their tactics on a regular basis.

"You're taught in the infantry that you can always improve your position," Miller said. "There are always improvements to be made made in security ... always."



An Afghan National Army soldier uses a mirror to check a tactical vehicle for improvised explosive devices before allowing it to enter the base.

Photos by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry

Nations work together to save lives

By Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry
19th Public Affairs Detachment

MAZAR-E-SHARIF, Afghanistan -- Officials from the Jordanian Military Field Hospital met with officials from the 1st Norwegian Deployable Hospital here April 10.

The purpose of the visit was to see the hospitals and establish a relationship between the people of both nations, said Norwegian Army Lt. Col. Lars Olson, commanding officer in charge of the Norwegian hospital.

"We are in the same business ... providing medical attention to save lives," said Jordanian Army Col. Muhammad al-Hiyari, Jordanian hospital director.

The Jordanian officials, including base commander Col. Mohid Megdady, were given a tour of the hospital's facilities.

After completing the tour al-Hiyari said he was impressed with the hospital's assets.

"Their hospital is very well-equipped. ... I would come here if I was sick or injured,"



Photo by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry

Jordanian Army Lt. Col. Mohannad al-Haj discusses pharmaceuticals with Norwegian Army Maj. Inge Tangen at the Norwegian hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif on April 10. Al-Haj is the clinical pharmacist and chief of supply for the Jordanian Military Field Hospital. Tangen is a pharmacist at the 1st Deployable Norwegian Hospital.

he said.

Olson said he believes the visit was the first step in building a lasting bond with the Jordanian hospital staff.

"We have good skills, but a small capacity. ... They have good skills and a larger capacity. We have to look at the bigger picture, see how we can

work together to benefit everyone," he said.

While both hospitals are in place to care for injured and sick, each medical facility has a different mission.

The Jordanian hospital focuses on treating Afghans, while the Norwegian mainly cares for International

Security Assistance Forces, Afghan National Army soldiers and Afghan National Police officers, said Norwegian Army Lt. Col. William Bratlie Jensen, hospital director.

However, both hospitals will handle any emergency that arrives, he added.



PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Air Force Staff Sgt. Justin D. Stone works on an A-10 Thunderbolt II engine on Bagram Airfield on April 14. Stone is assigned to the 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente
 455th Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

If you have high-quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.

Photos by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry



Black Water Aviation pilot Mark Meginnes hands cargo to Army Sgt. Donald Brown on April 3 in Mazar-e-Sharif. Brown is an airfield security team leader assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 10th Logistics Task Force.

Security team guards airfield, planes



Army Spc. Hunter Torrez stands watch over the flight line as an aircraft is unloaded April 7. Torrez is assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 10th Logistics Task Force at Mazar-e-Sharif.

By Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry
19th Public Affairs Detachment

MAZAR-E-SHARIF, Afghanistan -- When the 10th Logistics Task Force airfield security team hears "ten mikes out; ten mikes out," on the radio, the team's Soldiers jump out of their pickup trucks and take their positions along the airfield here.

The Soldiers provide security, load and unload aircraft, and handle the manifest paperwork, said Army Spc. Eric LaFramboise, noncommissioned officer in charge of airfield operations for Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 10th LTF.

Ten minutes before an aircraft lands, LaFramboise's team secures the airfield, directs traffic, mans the tower for communications with the plane and prepares necessary loading equipment.

"We're not really worried about a direct attack," said Army Sgt. Donald Brown, airfield security team leader with the HHD.

We're more concerned with (improvised explosive devices) from the local traffic that has to cross the airfield."

As Brown and two other Soldiers keep traffic under control, other team members will load and unload the aircraft.

"The main thing coming in through the airfield is mail and personnel," LaFramboise said.

The team also sees plenty of supplies destined for the nearby Regional Corps Assistance Group and the Jordanian Military Field Hospital.

Keeping the airfield operations running smoothly is a mission not taken lightly by LaFramboise's team.

"Without these flights, the Jordanian hospital wouldn't have supplies, and we wouldn't have mail, therefore morale would be lowered," LaFramboise said.

The entire mission in Afghanistan is like a machine -- each job is a cog -- if everybody does their job then things continue to carry on as they should, Brown added.

Interpreter uses skills to help Coalition Troops try to affect positive change through education

By Army Pfc.

Anna K. Perry

19th Public Affairs Detachment

MAZAR-E-SHARIF, Afghanistan -- Education has always been a priority for Sohrad Wasiq, an Afghan doctor who speaks five languages and is currently working as an interpreter for the 10th Logistics Task Force here.

Wasiq, known to the 10th LTF Soldiers as 'Doc Sohrad,' was in his fourth year of medical school at the Balkh Medical College when the Taliban came into power. Unlike many of his classmates, Wasiq did not believe dropping out of school was an option.

"Education wasn't taken seriously, people just quit going to school ... and a lot of good teachers and doctors left the



Photo by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry

Sohrad Wasiq gives directions to an Afghan at the Jordanian Military Field Hospital. Wasiq is an interpreter working for the 10th Logistics Task Force in Mazar-e-Sharif.

See SKILLS Page 13

Spartan leaders, Kunar governor talk security

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Pintagro

Task Force Spartan Public Affairs

CAMP WRIGHT, Afghanistan -- The commander and command sergeant major of the Coalition's Task Force Spartan, joined by key Marine Corps and provincial reconstruction team leaders, met with the governor of Kunar Province on April 7 to discuss security, reconstruction and other issues.

The meeting, held at Gov. Assadullah Wafa's compound in Asadabad, was the first between Wafa and the leaders of Task Force Spartan, made up primarily of the Fort Drum, N.Y.-based 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 10th Mountain Division. The Spartans assumed security responsibilities in eastern Afghanistan in March and April 12 began Operation Mountain Lion to deny insurgents sanctuary and prevent the re-emergence of terrorism in the region.

Discussion topics included the need to defeat terrorists along the border with Pakistan.

"It was a very successful and very important first meeting with a key player in a key province," said Army Command Sgt. Maj. James Redmore, the command sergeant major of Task Force Spartan.



Photos by Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Pintagro

Army Col. John Nicholson, left, and Kunar Province Gov. Assadullah Wafa exchange salutations during an April 7 meeting here. Nicholson, commander of the Coalition's Task Force Spartan, and other Coalition leaders met with Wafa to discuss security and other issues.

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SKILLS from Page 12

country," Wasiq said.

Wasiq chose to continue studying, despite the difficulties presented by the Taliban rule.

"Before the Taliban, the medical college had good relations with foreign countries. ... We used to get new educational materials," Wasiq said.

That all stopped and the students had to study old books, he said.

Outdated textbooks aside, Wasiq's determination prevailed.

"I didn't want to quit. I would lose everything. It didn't matter how hard it was ... I went. I finished the last year of college the year the Taliban fell," Wasiq said.

Wasiq said his family instilled his value of education.

"My parents were behind me the entire time," he said.

Growing up, Wasiq said he

remembers that education was always stressed by his family.

"My father studied outside of the country and served in the army as a pilot. ... My mother is the director of a ladies' school," he said.

Wasiq also has family members who work in law, education, medicine and media professions.

In the future, Wasiq said he would like to study urology in India and then return to help serve the people of his country.

For now, however, Wasiq said he is happy to use his skills to serve his Coalition friends by interpreting for the 10th LTF and the Jordanian Military Field Hospital here.

"The way we are living right now is due to the Coalition forces. ... The life of the people of my country has gotten better with all the reconstruction," Wasiq said. "I'm very thankful for everything they have done."

Sohrad Wasiq, an interpreter working for the 10th Logistics Task Force, Mazar-e-Sharif, translates for an Afghan girl at the Jordanian Military Field Hospital.

SPARTAN from Page 12

"The governor's interests are the same as ours. We both want the terrorists either dead or out of Kunar Province, and we want the people to prosper," he added.

Army Col. John Nicholson, the Task Force Spartan commander, stressed the importance of cooperation among Soldiers, Marines and Afghan National Security Forces in the effort.

"The same enemy that is fighting you and your government is fighting against us," Nicholson said. "We thank you for allowing us to come and fight alongside you."

"This can't be just an American or an Afghan effort," he continued. "Our goal is to separate the enemy from the people and secure the people. We know there is tough fighting ahead, but the ANA, the ANP and the Coalition are ready for that fighting."

Nicholson pledged to "to change Kunar for the better," emphasizing road construction as one way to thwart improvised explosive device attacks, facilitate transportation and encourage economic activity.

The governor embraced the task force commander's vision and offered his assistance in Coalition endeavors.

"The people know that when the Americans came to the country, they brought peace and prosperity," he said.



Photo by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry, 19th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldier gets Purple Heart

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE ORGUN-E,

Afghanistan -- A Soldier from the 2nd Battalion of the 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, was awarded a Purple Heart for wounds received February 26.

Spc. Philip G. King II, from Paradise, Calif., received the award from Army Maj. Gen. Benjamin C. Freakley, commander of the Coalition's Combined Joint Task Force - 76, and Gen. Dan K. McNeill, commanding general of Army Forces Command, during a ceremony here April 1.

King was wounded when an improvised explosive device detonated near his convoy. He received wounds to his face.

King's squad leader, Staff Sgt. Travis J. Ferguson of Colonial Heights, Va., was also injured during the explosion. Ferguson was evacuated to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where he received treatment for his wounds. On March 25, Army Brig. Gen. Carter F. Ham, deputy director of regional operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, presented a Purple Heart to Ferguson at Walter Reed.

Navy Chief mentors Afghan troops

Sailor uses skills to teach soldiers value of honor, courage, commitment

By Petty Officer 1st Class James Pinsky
Navy News Service

HERAT, Afghanistan -- A Sailor is using his skills as a chief petty officer as a valuable leadership tool for Afghan forces at Camp Victory near Herat.

Chief Petty Officer Archee Santos, a storekeeper, has the unique responsibility of mentoring one of the Afghan National Army's units.

"The ANA is only three years old," Santos said, "so that means the most experienced person in the whole army only has three years under (his or her) belt. It's a young army, and they need strong mentoring. Being a Navy chief, I'm prepared to fill that role for them."

Santos said the ANA had no written standard of values like the Navy's core values of honor, courage and commitment. Their military leadership, he explained, was based on the old Soviet style, which did not make use of noncommissioned officers as leaders.

"Before, there were officers and enlisted, and that was it," Santos said. "You had no chain of command. You only had the commander. There were no checks and balances like our chain of command."

Santos instilled a sense of pride, responsibility and hierarchy based on the Navy's structure.

"I taught them that as leaders, it is their job to look after their soldiers first and foremost," Santos said. "Once the soldiers saw that their (leaders) cared about them, that they were going to be there for

"Once the soldiers saw that their (leaders) cared about them ... there wasn't anything the soldiers wouldn't do for their leaders."

Navy Chief Petty Officer Archee Santos

them every day, there wasn't anything the soldiers wouldn't do for their leaders. It's a basic leadership principle, but it's one that they simply didn't know."

As a mentor in a foreign land, Santos said, the language and culture barriers have proved to be the toughest obstacles in his way.

"As a leader, I've learned that you can't come down hard on these guys," Santos said, "because doing that to them, especially with other soldiers around is considered shame, and shame has far-reaching effects in the Afghan culture. It

can shut a soldier down."

Santos credits his own chief's initiation as the primary teacher for how to develop ANA soldiers.

"My chief's [transition] was all about overcoming discouragement," Santos said. "I had it drilled into my head how to overcome being discouraged and motivating people who were discouraged. That has been very useful here."

All American military mentors in Afghanistan have access to interpreters who serve as the primary means of communication between them and their students. But Santos said

he doesn't rely on just his interpreter.

"I've learned some Dari and try to use it as often as possible," Santos said. "It's very flattering to people in a foreign land when you try to use their language, and I want them to know I care."

His soldiers also have learned some English words both out of practicality and respect.

Dari isn't the only thing Santos has been able to learn while deployed to Afghanistan.

"One of the things I can definitely say I've learned from being here," Santos said, "is that you have to learn to do the best with what you have because sometimes that's all you will ever get. Here, that's the rule more than the exception, and as a storekeeper, not being able to get what I want is something new to me."



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Melvin Hayden inspects athletic shoes Afghan National Army recruits want to exchange at the central issuing facility at the new Kabul Military Training Facility in Afghanistan. Hayden and other Navy storekeepers are deployed to Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix to provide logistical support for the Afghan National Army.

Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class James Pinsky

Photos by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry



Two young Afghan women huddle under their burkas to open their recently aquired bags of clothing, candy and toys.

Field hospital offers civic assistance

By Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry
19th Public Affairs Detachment

MAZAR-E-SHARIF, Afghanistan -- Afghan children rushed to receive clothing, candy and toys passed out at the Jordanian Military Field Hospital April 8 in Mazar-e-Sharif.

The gifts were donated by the friends, family and co-workers of Army Chief Warrant Officers Kevin Devery and Bret Berlinger, C-12 Detachment, Operational Support Airlift

Command. Schoolchildren from Yardley, Pa., and Brigantine, N.J., also contributed items for the Afghan children.

Those who donated items received photographs of the children and letters regarding the impact the items could have on the children's lives, Devery said.

This will give friends back home an in-depth perspective on the situation in Afghanistan, and help remedy the needs of the Afghan children, he added.



(Above) Jordanian commander Col. Mohid Megdady hands a bag of candy, clothing and shoes to two Afghan girls at the Jordanian Military Field Hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif on April 8.

(Left) An Afghan boy holds a bag of clothing at the Jordanian Military Field Hospital on April 8.

Freedom Watch

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"I am a soldier. This is what I do."

-- Polish Sgt. Biero Wojciech